

Irish Radio Transmitter Society Radio News Bulletin

Sunday 08 May 2022

Morse Testing Resumed

Following on from the awarding of the HAREC Exam Contract to the Irish Radio Transmitters Society, Morse testing has also resumed. Testing was conducted at the IRTS AGM in Carlow and is being carried out on-line as required. Full details including sample tests are available on www.irts.ie/morse

Congratulations to the following members who recently upgraded: Patricia Kelly Yin, EI8IQB who is now EI6LB, Conor Conran, EI4GTB who is now EI8LB, Jason MacGarrigle, EI6GRB who is now EI9LB, Tony Proudfoot, EI2INB, is now EI3LC, and Christine Heigl, EI8IDB who is now EI5LC.

NSWLC Membership and Activities

The National Short Wave Listeners Club has 83 members. Our weekly Zoom Sunday Socials continue to be popular with an average attendance of 35-40 members. 47 members are currently signed up for HAREC Class Echo and about 43 have usually attended the Tuesday and Thursday sessions. The course has reached its half-way point and we expect to finish it by the end of June, just in time for the next HAREC exam. Students are asking many questions, and there is a very good level of interaction considering the class size. We have high hopes for the exam.

IRTS Study Guide

The tutors of the NSWLC have been very busy rewriting the IRTS Course Guide into the new IRTS Study Guide compliant with the new Irish HAREC exam structure and syllabus. We are also updating and modernising the material where possible. It has gone through 17 internal versions, which the current students have been proof-reading. Class Echo students have been very helpful in identifying and rewriting those sections that were causing learning issues. The guide is approximately 65% complete. We hope to share its first fully complete draft with the wider IRTS membership in about a week or two. We hope to solicit more feedback and to ask for more help in proof-reading it.

Shannon Basin Radio Club news

Members of the Shannon Basin Radio Club will be taking part in the European leg of the mills on the air weekend on 14th/15th May, operating from Elphin Windmill in Co. Roscommon and using the call-sign EI2EWM. More information on the Mills On The Air events and the stations registered for the Mills on the air weekends can be seen at <https://www.ddars.net/mills.html>

One of our members Marty EI2IAB recently gave a radio interview on the hobby of Amateur Radio on the Roscommon based local radio station "Ros FM". Marty explained the hobby in Ireland and the existence of local clubs around the country where people with an interest in the hobby could get in touch with local people and see aspects of the hobby at field days and special events. The interview is available on the "highlights and full shows" section of the podcasts on the Ros FM website at www.rosfm.ie A direct link is also available on the Shannon Basin Radio club website www.sbrcl.ie and our facebook page and anyone wishing to find out more about the club are very welcome to contact us via the website or facebook page, or go along to any of our meetings or club events.

Amelia Earhart

As part of the 90th anniversary celebrations of Amelia Earhart landing her plane near Derry the Northwest Group Amateur Radio Club are on the air as GB0AEL from the 13th of May until the end of the month. Amelia Earhart was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic. More information on qrz.com under the call-sign GB0AEL.

Contests

The 56th Alessandro Volta RTTY Contest commences at 12:00 GMT on the 14th of May and runs for 24 hours. Info at www.contestvolta.com

On Monday the RSGB 3.5MHz Club Championship Contest SSB leg runs for 90 minutes starting at 19:00 UTC. Rules and details can be found on the "Contest Calender" at www.rsgbcc.org

A novel format of a contest was organized by the Croatian Amateur Radio Association. The 64th state level competition of Young Technicians of the Republic of Croatia was held from May 2nd to May 4th in Primosten. The competitions took place in 12 categories. 14 children from 14 counties competed in the "Radio Communication" category. The first place of the three parts competition was won by Filip, 9A3BCW. In the first part, competitors took a written test of general technical knowledge. The second part was the construction of a small radio transmitter. The third part simulated an emergency, the task was to find an injured person. This part

involved orienteering with the help of a map, locating a radio beacon carried by the injured person by means of a radio direction finder, determining the person's coordinates and distance, and relaying the position by radio.

IARU Region-1 Competition

Alex, IV3KKW writes on the IARU Region-1 website: "The IARU Region 1 is inviting you to come up with a game-changing idea, which could lead to more licensed radio amateurs. Make a team, share your idea, present your proposal and bring this to reality: this is the time for a change in amateur radio and we are looking for you! The best proposals will be rewarded, don't miss this opportunity! Don't wait too long, the last day of submission will be the 31st of May."

The idea competition has three steps: Until the 31st of May draft proposals are received. On the 10th of June the IARU Region 1 pre-jury selects the best ideas and informs teams that can then prepare more detailed projects. And on the 25th of June, during Hamradio 22, the best projects will be rewarded.

IOTA DX

Following last week's news item, Yuris, YL2GM, a member of the Latvian Amateur Radio League, together with Manoj, VU2CPL and Deepak, VU2CDP are now quite active on the air from Andaman Islands, IOTA AS-001 until the 16th of May. They report over 10000 QSOs in the log already, but have to put up with constant rain, with more rain and wind forecast. 160m suffers from noise, but they will try a different antenna setup. One of the K3 transceivers got damaged in transit, plus there are frequent power outages explaining the sudden disappearance from the bands. For now they restrict themselves to CW, SSB is obviously still too difficult, given the adverse operating conditions. They are sending updates of their operation to www.lral.lv

Amsat News

The long serving Fuji-3 FO-29 satellite is eclipsing on every orbit and the condition of the batteries does not permit continuous operation. It will be fully sunlit from August to next spring, so continuous operation will be possible later in the year. Until the end of May the analog transponder will be turned on until it is automatically turned off by its under-voltage control.

Aircraft Altimeter Retrofits

The United States' Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will meet on Wednesday with telecom and airline industry officials in a push to retrofit and ultimately replace some airplane radio altimeters that could face interference from C-Band 5G wireless services. The altimeters give data on a plane's height above the ground and are crucial for bad-weather landings. Potential wireless interference from a planned 5G rollout led to disruptions at some U.S. airports earlier this year. The planned round-table meeting will consider retrofits with antenna filters, which mitigate potential interference from 5G.

Man Over Board

The NRRL News Bulletin details how a Norwegian radio amateur helped a sailor to be rescued last Thursday. In addition to being an avid radio amateur, Geir, LA5ZO is also an avid sailor. He is currently in port in Horta, on the island of Faial on the Azores with his Ocean Viking sailboat. On Thursday evening at 2341 UTC he received an emergency call via Digital Selective Call (DSC) on 12 MHz. The call came from the Hong Kong registered Bulk Carrier M/V Shandong Fu Xin which is on its way from New Orleans on a course for the Panama Canal. They reported a "Man Overboard" and stated their position as 27.39 degrees North and 88.49 degrees East. Geir checked the position on a the map and found that it had to be wrong. The given position was ashore in Bangladesh. He had the ship's MMSI number and searched for it on the MarineTraffic website. There he found the actual position, 88 degrees West instead of 88 degrees East, about 100 nautical miles South of New Orleans. He then phoned the US Coast Guard that cover the area. They had not received any DSC call and thanked for info and said they would call the ship on satellite phone. On Friday Geir, LA5ZO read online that following a search the sailor had been found by an aircraft with a heat-seeking camera, and then been saved by a helicopter. He was wearing an inflatable working vest. This case ended well. One man's curiosity became another man's rescue.

The Propagation Horoscope

There were more than 50 solar flares since the 1st of May, including one high-energy X-class flare on Tuesday noon, causing a radio blackout on the day-side. Yet the Kp index has remained low, allowing for a stable ionosphere. Solar flux indices have been steadily climbing to 140, the solar wind is at 400 km/s, with a proton density of around 3 particles per cubic centimeters late on Friday. The geomagnetic conditions are predicted to be quiet with a Kp index of 2, but a new active sunspot group is

coming into view at the sun's southeastern limb. NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory recorded large plumes from a partially eclipsed solar flare on Thursday from that region, one to be watched. Two overlapping minor CMEs are expected to cause some disturbances late on Monday, together with longer lasting high D-Layer absorption. Expect poor 80 and 60 meter band conditions, but moderate to good conditions on the higher bands. A large high pressure cell over the British Isles will likely move into France and further East, promising good VHF tropo-spheric DX until next weekend. It's a bit early yet for prolonged Sporadic-E, but keep an ear on 10m and above just after sunrise and around sunset.

That is the news for this week. Items for inclusion in next week's radio news can be submitted by email to newsteam@irts.ie for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. The deadline is midnight on Friday.

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